



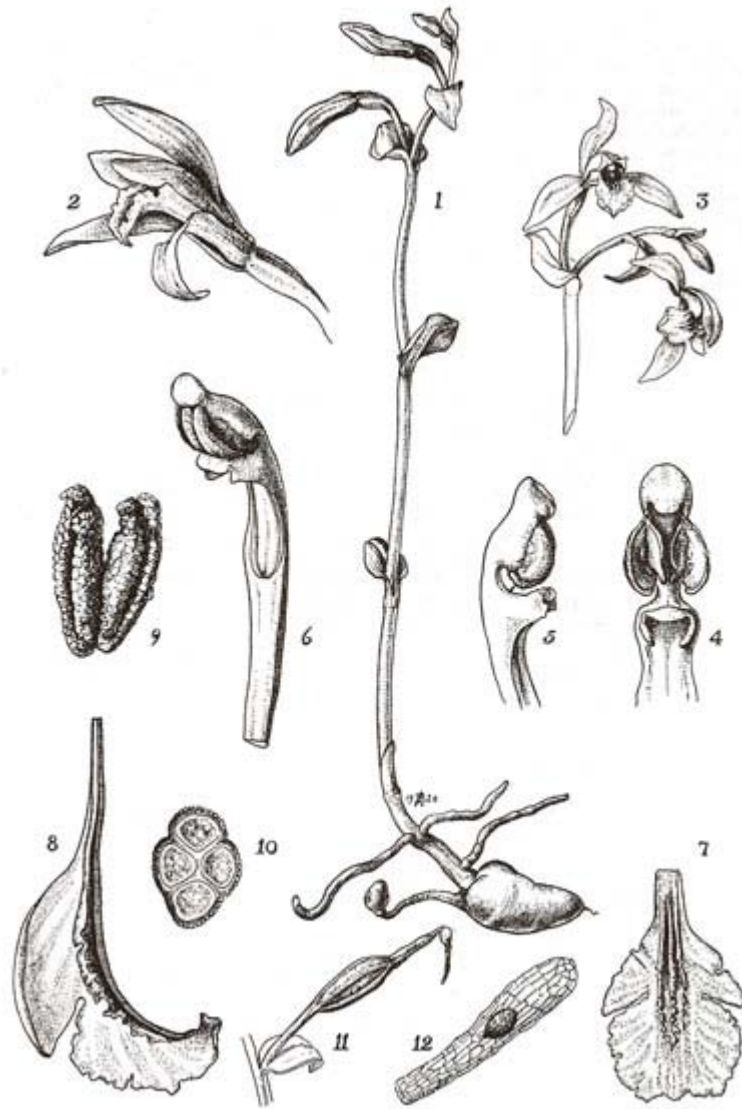
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Natural Heritage Program

Triphora trianthophora (Sw.) Rydb
Threebirds, Nodding Pogonia

Identification: Plant glabrous, 8-30 cm tall, stoloniferous, producing at the ends of the stolons waxy tubers to 3 cm long. Roots slender, whitish. Stems slender or stout, succulent, and usually tinged with maroon, but sometimes green apically. Leaves 2-6 in number, bractlike, concave, clasping and partly sheathing the stem, scattered alternately along the stem, usually tinged and veined with maroon, widely ovate, 8-20 mm long, 5-13 mm wide, and obtuse to short-acute. Inflorescence of 1-6 (usually 3) flowers borne in the axils of the upper leaves. Flowers resupinate, pale pink to almost white, veined or suffused with purple and green, nodding to nearly erect, gaping, and lasting only a day (rarely more). Sepals and petals elliptic to oblong-spatulate, 13-15 mm long, 4-5 mm wide, and obtuse to acute. Lip 3-lobed, obovate in outline, 13-16 mm long, about 10 mm wide when spread out, narrowed to a slender claw, and 3-keeled or crested on the median line of the disc with the keels broken into teeth or tubercles above. Capsule pendent or erect, ellipsoid, and up to 15 mm by 10 mm.

Key ID characters:

- Plant glabrous and up to 30 cm tall.
- Succulent stem usually tinged with maroon.
- Leaves relatively small.
- Usually 3 flowered.
- Flowers pale pink or whitish.
- Lip 3-lobed.



T. triamthopora from *Aquatic and Wetland Plants of the Southeastern United States: Monocotyledons* by Godfrey and Wooten. Copyright ©1979 University of Georgia Press, Athens, reproduced by permission of the publisher

Habitat: On rotten logs and in rich humus and leaf mold of low hammocks, hardwood and coniferous forests, rich woods along streams, edges of swamps, floodplain forests, mountain slopes.

Taxonomic Comments: This species may be more accurately referred to as *Triphora trianthophora* (Swartz) Rydberg subsp. *trianthophora* and is a member of the family Orchidaceae with about 40 species in LA. There are however no other species of the genus *Triphora* known to LA.



Hardwood Forest

Status:

Wetland: FACW - Facultative Wetland
Global: G3G4 - Vulnerable - Apparently Secure
State: S1 - Critically Imperiled

Range: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Soils: Prefers highly organic humus layer.

Similar Species: This species is easily recognized if at all seen. There are many diminutive orchid species with whitish flowers, primarily seen in *Spiranthes*. Species of the genus *Spiranthes* often have flowers that are numerous and arranged in spirals.

Reason for Rarity: Habitat loss, and collection by plant enthusiasts.

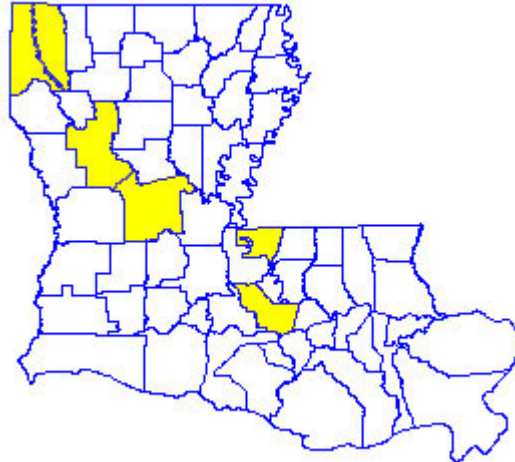
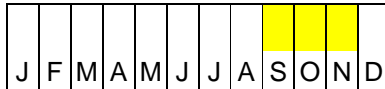
Known Distribution in Louisiana:

Bossier*, Caddo, Iberville*, Natchitoches,
Rapides, West Feliciana

* Indicates unverified presence in parish.

Dates of Natural Heritage Program**Observations:**

1939, 1977, 1980, 1992, 1994(3), 1998(2)

Best Time for Viewing this Species:

Distribution in Louisiana

References:

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